

BROOKLINE POLICE DEPARTMENT



PATROL DIVISION BIKE UNIT 2012 ANNUAL REPORT

**CHIEF DANIEL C. O'LEARY
CAPTAIN MYLES MURPHY
SERGEANT MARK TRAHON**



TOWN OF BROOKLINE

Massachusetts

POLICE DEPARTMENT

DANIEL C. O'LEARY
CHIEF OF POLICE

To: Chief Daniel O'Leary

From: Sgt. Mark R. Trahon

Date: January 1, 2013

Re: Year End Report 2012 - Patrol Bike Unit (PBU)

Sir,

As 2012 concluded, it marked the completion of the second year of the Patrol Bike Unit (PBU). The PBU has been an integral part of the Department and continues to grow in popularity. Over the past two years, and specifically during 2012, the PBU has been used as an effective tool in deterring criminal activity, providing alternative enforcement methods, promoting positive interactions with citizens, and educating the public regarding bicycle and vehicular safety.

Personnel

The PBU welcomed 2 new members in 2012 as Officer Edward Tam and Officer Boris Vragovic joined the other 11 members:

Sgt. Mark Trahon
Officer Lloyd Davis
Officer Patrick Elwood
Officer Fred Amendola
Officer Timothy Stephenson
Officer Allen Gustie
Officer Yu Kajita
Officer Ryan Lee
Officer Brendan Morgan
Officer Duane Danforth
Officer Raymond Richards



Each member of the PBU must attend an approved bicycle patrol-training program. The above named officers attended specialized training presented by the Municipal Police Training Committee. The course is designed to teach the entry level rider the necessary skills required to safely perform police duties on a bicycle. This is achieved by utilizing classroom discussion, hands on training, and expert health and wellness instruction which will help develop a well rounded foundation for the police bike officer.

Officer Lloyd Davis, who also attended a one-day training for bike repair, continues to make minor repairs and adjustments to the bikes keeping our maintenance costs to a minimum. Officers Fred Amendola and Patrick Elwood were assigned to the day shift and were assigned to the PBU consistently throughout the year. Officers Davis, Stephenson, Gustie, Kajita, Tam, and Richards were assigned to the 2nd Platoon and used regularly throughout the year as well. Officers R. Lee and Morgan were assigned to the 3rd Platoon and saw limited shifts on the bike; however they were utilized effectively on bikes in the fall when the college students returned to the area. Officer Duane Danforth was deployed overseas with the military during 2012.

Equipment

- 5 Marin Mountain Bikes purchased prior to 2011, ranging in size from 15 to 17 inches
- 5 Trek Mountain Bikes purchased during 2011, ranging in size from 19.5 to 22.5 inches
 - Each bike is equipped with a 2 Watt Strobe Light, Mega Horn/Siren, and Patrol Bag which holds the officers equipment.

- 2 Thule Bike Racks equipped to hold multiple bikes at a time. Currently, the 541 and 544 cruisers have trailer hitches that hold the bike racks.
- 3 'Kryptonite' bike locks
- 1 Repair Kit which includes rags, tools, and minor repair stock consisting of 15 tire tubes to repair flat/broken tires and 9 Breaking Shoes to repair/adjust the breaking mechanism.
- 1 Repair Stand
- Each officer assigned to the PBU is equipped with the following:
 - 1 Black Universal Bike helmet
 - 1 Ultra Duty Belt Nylon and Nylon keepers and pouches
 - 1 Uniforce Tactical Eyewear
 - 1 Grip Tip Bike patrol Gloves
 - 1 Six Panal Pro Style Cap Navy
 - 2 Bike Polo Shirts (Short Sleeve)
 - 2 Bike Shorts Stretch Bamboo Navy
 - 1 Bike Pant Stretch Bamboo Navy
 - 1 Elite Spider 5" Boot
 - 1 Reversible Reflective Jacket



Assignments

PBU daily assignments and deployments are a direct result of reports received from the Crime Analysis Unit (CAU). The information we receive from the CAU allows us to deploy our resources in the most effective and efficient manner. Aside from daily assignments and responsibilities in 2012, the PBU officers worked specific venues where their function was to supplement other patrol units, increase officer visibility and become more accessible to the public.

On April 16, 2012, three members of the PBU were assigned to Beacon Street for the Boston Marathon. This allowed for expanded police coverage in areas that had been problematic in the past. With multiple street closures, the bikes were able to maneuver in and out of the crowds and closed off streets with relative ease.

In June 2012, PBU Officers Elwood and Stephenson assisted with the Lincoln Schools Walk for Haiti. They assisted the students as they walked to every elementary school in Town.

On August 9, 2012, PBU Officer Amendola assisted with a health fair at the New England Baptist Hospital. During his time there, he explained the health benefits of bike riding and the Brookline Police Department's dedication to bike safety and the enforcement strategies that we have in place.

On August 29th, the PBU played a significant roll in "Operation Welcome Back," which was a plan to assist and educate the returning students to the lower Beacon Street area. PBU Officer Elwood joined together with Community Service Officer McNeil during the day and spoke with many students and parents about the Town of Brookline By-Laws as they pertain to 'quality of life' issues. That evening, PBU officers continued to work in that area by conducting bicycle enforcement and advising the new students to the bicycle laws and how we enforce them.

Throughout the month of September, several PBU officers worked on Friday and Saturday nights as part of the 'Loud Party Car' assignment, which allowed the bike officers to assist the Patrol Division in responding to loud party/quality of life calls for service. The officers were able to position themselves in way that allowed them to listen for and respond to these calls that are vitally important at this time of year.

On September 17th, the PBU assisted Temple Ohabei Shalom as they celebrated a religious holiday and large group from their congregation walked from Beacon Street to Jamaica Plain.

On September 23rd, the PBU played a prominent roll in "Brookline Day," which was a day long celebration at Larz Anderson Park. The PBU had a full display tent at the park and several PBU officers attended. Bike safety pamphlets were handed out to children and adults. The PBU officers also took rides around the park to ensure public safety throughout the celebration.

Enforcement

The Brookline Police Department believes that the education and enforcement of traffic laws, for both bicyclists and motorists, is critical to improving bicycle safety and enjoyment. In 2012, the PBU made a concerted effort to continue the philosophy of the Department by enforcing motor vehicle and bicycle laws aggressively in order to work towards our goal of a safer community.

In 2012, in addition to performing daily bike enforcement, the members of the PBU participated in several Joint Enforcement Programs along with the Bike Units from the Boston University Police and Boston Police Departments. Once every several weeks, the members of the PBU would meet up with these other agencies and conduct bicycle enforcement and education along Commonwealth Avenue and surrounding streets. Bicyclists who committed a violation would be stopped, issued a citation, an educational pamphlet, and in some instances a free bike helmet. These assignments accomplished several objectives simultaneously. First, the bike laws were enforced to such a degree that there was a noticeable decline in the amount of violations as the year progressed. Secondly, the interaction with the cyclists and the issuance of helmets was a positive community policing effort. Lastly, the large number of officers and supervisors that were engaged in the Joint

Enforcement Program caught the attention of both cyclists and motorists reminding them to share the road and obey the traffic laws.

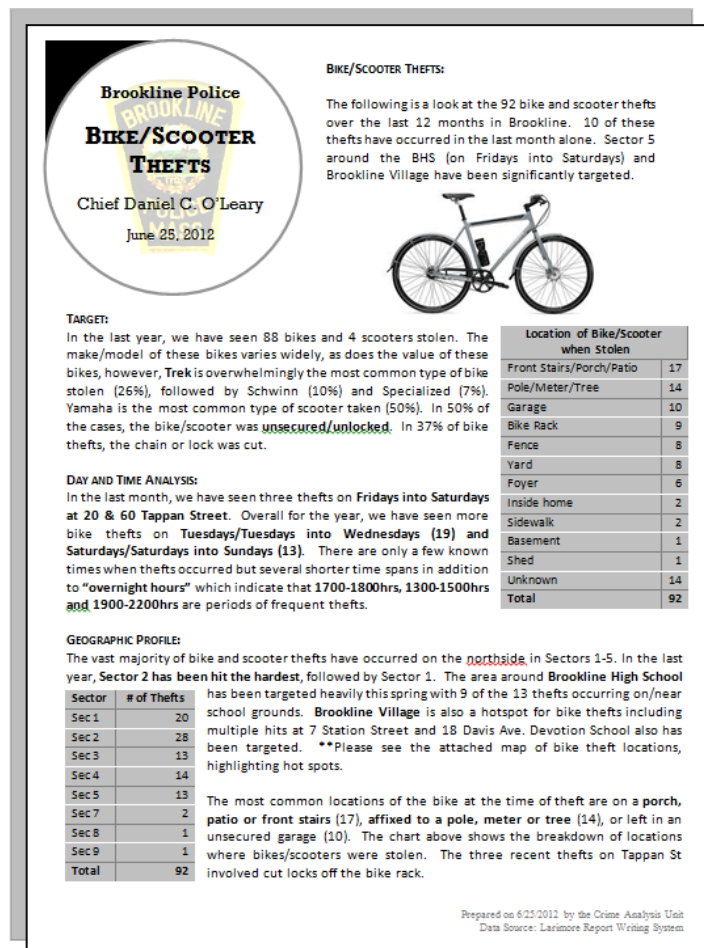
In 2012, the PBU was deployed a total of 369 shifts for a total of 2,555 work hours. 350 shifts were uniformed bike patrol and 19 were surveillance/plain clothes assignments. During the uniformed patrol assignments, the PBU members wrote **1,413 Town By-Law Citations** for bicycle violations. The non-PBU units wrote **783 Town By-Law Citations** for bicycle violations, resulting in a Department total of **2,196 Citations for bicycle violations in 2012.**

Going forward into 2013, the enforcement philosophy of the PBU will be slightly altered. The introduction phase of education, coupled with predominantly written warnings, will move to a compliance phase which will consist of warnings and fines based on several factors. The officers assigned to the PBU are aware that when deciding between a warning and fine they should utilize proper decision making techniques by taking into consideration the egregiousness of the violation, the degree to which public safety was put at risk, and the history of the cyclists. This 'totality of the circumstances' will assist them in using their discretion in a positive and effective manner.

Crime Detection / Prevention

In October, Officers Gustie, Davis and Kajita worked a combined seven undercover shifts (plain clothes) from October 9th through the 12th on the bikes. These assignments were made as a result of a series of robberies that were occurring in Sector 1 along Commonwealth Avenue and surrounding streets. These officers were able to supplement the increased patrols by riding their bikes in locations where traditional police vehicles cannot operate. This assignment allowed the officers to engage in crime detection while on the bikes and served as a useful tool in trying to apprehend the suspects responsible for several robberies.

In 2012, there were 89 reports of stolen bicycles, up 27% from 70 in 2011. It is believed that this is only a fraction of the bikes actually stolen each year. With the increase of bike riding in Brookline and the surrounding communities, the amount of bikes stolen each year will only increase unless the Police and the community take an active roll in its prevention. The prevention steps taken in 2012 by the PBU included



educating the public of the prevalence of bicycle theft and of the importance of reporting their bike stolen. In addition, while interacting with the cyclists, the members of the PBU reminded them of the importance of using a quality bike lock and keeping a record of the bicycle's serial number.

Together, with prevention and education, actively pursuing the bike thieves is essential and during 2012, the 'Bait Bike' program was implemented. The 'Bait Bike' program is a GPS based property decoy system which was initiated after several members of the department and dispatch center were trained on its use and tracking abilities. Lt. Hayes initiated the correspondence with Freight Watch Security Net, which is the company that tracks the GPS device. The 'Bait Bike' works by hiding a GPS locator on a bicycle and placing the bicycle in high theft area. The bicycle can be left in that location for several days. The GPS can be programmed to activate on movement and a notification is sent via text message indicating that the bait bike is moving. The Brookline Police Dispatch Center can then begin tracking the unit in real time. The system allows for location updates every thirty seconds.

The "Bait Bike" was deployed in the fall of 2012 after a spike in bicycle thefts in August and September. With information received from the Crime Analysis Unit, the bike was placed in specific areas that were determined to be bike theft hot spots. The 'Bait Bike' remained at these locations for five days without being moved. As expected, there were a few minor technical/tracking issues that needed to be cleared up and Lt. Hayes remained in constant communication with Freight Watch Security Net to resolve the problems. We look forward to utilizing this program going forward in 2013.

Conclusion

Overall, 2012 was a productive and positive year for the Patrol Bike Unit and it was a direct result of the work and effort of every member of the Unit. The officers conducted themselves professionally throughout the year and interacted with the public in a manner that promoted the Department in a positive way. Each officer took on their assignments with pride and self-motivation which resulted in delivering a superior police service to the members of the community. The PBU couldn't have had such a successful year had it not been for the individual officers and the unique qualities they bring to the Unit. The PBU looks forward to continuing this high level of service in to 2013.

